

All right, hey everybody, welcome to Valley Creek. Welcome hope carriers, whatever campus you're at. Denton, Flower Mound, Gainesville, Lewisville, The Venue, online, somewhere in the world, can we just welcome each other together? We are so glad you are here with us today and we only have two weeks left in our series called the Hope Carrier Initiative. Since the beginning of the year, we have been talking about, what does it look like to be a disciple of Jesus living on mission who changes their world. And so, I just want to jump right in with you today and I just want to ask you this question – what defines a successful hope carrier? We've been talking about this all year. It'd probably be pretty important for us to understand what success looks like. Like, what is a successful hope carrier? How do you know that you're winning?

What does success look like? Is it when that person you're trying to bring hope to comes to church? Is it when that person gets saved and accepts Jesus? Is it when that area of life, that you're trying to change, starts to reflect and reveal the character of the kingdom? Is it when you see and experience that breakthrough that you're praying for? Like what defines success? The answer is, success is obedience not results. If you want to know what success as a hope carrier looks like, it's obedience not results. It's obedience. It's doing what God asks you to do, when God asks you to do, how God asks you to do it. It is not results. It is not seeing that person's heart get changed. It is not seeing the city transform. It is not making it happen to bring that breakthrough. You can't do those things anyways. It's obedience. It's simply doing what God asks you to do, when God asks you to do, how God asks you to do it.

Now, understand, this definition is the exact opposite of the world. Because the world's definition of success is all about results, but the kingdom's definition is all about obedience. In fact, the apostle Paul, when people were arguing over who was successful and who was going to get the credit, said, "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So, neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose and each will be rewarded according to his own labor." Paul says, "Hey, let's be real clear on this. Some plant, some water, but only God makes it grow." He says, success is obedience not results. Why?

Because we've been assigned a task and we will be rewarded according to whether or not we obeyed and did our task. Not whether or not it grows, whether or not we planted or watered the way God asked us to do it. Some plant, some water, some tend, some fertilize, some weed, but only God makes it grow. Success is obedience, not results. Or how about 1 Samuel when it says, "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination [witchcraft]. And arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you as king." It says obedience is better than sacrifice. Success is obedience not results.

In other words, God doesn't care if you sit on the front row and cheer. He doesn't care if you serve. He doesn't care if you give. He doesn't care if you say all the right things and do all the right things and post verses on Instagram and declare that Jesus is your Lord to everyone around you. Like, He doesn't care about all that. What He cares about is obedience. Are you willing to just do what He asks you to do, when He asks you to do it, and how He asks you to do it? And it says rebellion is witchcraft. I don't have time to get into this a lot, but when we rebel against God, it's witchcraft. Witchcraft is manipulating the spiritual realm for my good and my glory. It's what rebellion is like. And he says, "Because you have rejected the word of the Lord" – because when we reject what God asks us to do, we reject Him as our king – "he has rejected you as the king." In other words, like we've been saying, you are only empowered to the level you're surrendered.

You can only release the kingdom to the level you're submitted and surrendered to it. And in context, this is the story of Saul. And Saul has got results. He went out and he defeated an evil kingdom. He conquered their king. He took all the animals and the gold and the silver, all these things that he said, "I'm going to give to the Lord." But He disobeyed God. So, he has all the results of the world, but he is not successful in the kingdom because success is obedience not results. Or how about David? In Psalm 51, when David is repenting because he took another man's wife, got her pregnant, had her husband killed so he could have her, and he is cut to the heart because he realizes what he has done. And he says, "You do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, oh God, you will not despise." If you want to know what repentance looks like, read Psalm 51.

If you want to know if that person in your life is repentant or not, measure it against Psalm 51. Psalm 51 is the picture of repentance. And here's what he says, God doesn't care about sacrifices and offerings. He doesn't care if you declare that you're going to be the greatest hope carrier and you're going to change your family and education and business and healthcare and government and sports and arts and media and technology and the church. What does He care about? A heart that is soft and surrendered and responsive to the Lord. Success is obedience guys, it's not results. And this is incredibly important to understand as a hope carrier and it's incredibly freeing when you get it. That God is not demanding me to make the change out there. He's just asking me to obey what He's asking me to do in here. And why is obedience such a big deal to God?

Because He's a loving father who has adopted you as a beloved son or daughter, brought you into His family and He wants you to obey out of love, out of trust, out of goodness, and He wants you to walk with Him because He is literally – hey guys, the monitor is off. If you could just shut it down for me? Because He is literally – Garrett, are we able to do that? Because it's like a giant weird screen. I'm not sure that we can or we can't. But God is inviting us to obey because He loves us and He has a hope and He has a future for you. Now, do you remember

when the disciples were sent out by Jesus? He sends them out – oh, nope, see now we lost my place. Can you guys just turn those off? Is there any way to do that? Thank you.

If you haven't figured it out about me, I am very visually distracted. That's why visualization really matters. Here's what Jesus says. So, it's good, you got a little bit of levity because it's about to get hard. Jesus says, "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples." Obedience is the validation of discipleship. Jesus says obedience is proof that I am a disciple. So, would your life validate that you're a disciple? Because this is what Jesus says. Like, it doesn't matter if you change your world if you're not a disciple. "Your kingdom come, your will be done." Doesn't matter if His kingdom is coming out there if His will is not being done in here. Jesus says, right, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do what I say?" It's a great question.

Why do you call me king? Why do you call me Lord? Why do you call me ruler and not do what I say? Because it's a contradiction in terms. Because if you call me king, it means you'll do what I say. Remember, we've talked about in this series that kings rule with their words and their actions. And whatever responds to their words and to their actions is within their kingdom, within their domain. But whatever rejects a king's words and actions, says I'm not a part of that kingdom. So, when I reject God's words in my life, what I'm saying is, I'm not a part of Your kingdom. But when I respond to it, I am saying You are my king and I want to be a part of Your kingdom. Every time you obey what God asks you to do, you say, "You're my king and I want to be a part of Your kingdom." Every time I resist it, "I say I am my own king and I will take care of my own kingdom." Success is obedience not results.

I mean, do you remember when Jesus sends out the 12, Luke 9 and 10 has this amazing empowerment. He's commissioned them, they're hope carriers. He's sending them out. And He says to them, "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you, heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet, we wipe off against you, yet be sure of this, the kingdom of God is near.'" Jesus sends them out and He says, some people will welcome you and some people will not. He says, let's be real clear about being a hope carrier right upfront. Some people are going to receive you, some people will reject you, some people are going to be excited about it, some people ain't going to want nothing to do about it, but either way, if you obey, you're successful. He's telling them upfront, this is not about results, this is about obedience, because if you obey, either way you have brought the kingdom of God near to them.

Because the kingdom was within you and you obeyed, you brought the kingdom of God near to them. And so, success is obedience not results. And what He's trying to free the disciples from, what He tries to free us from, is being focused on the results because it frees us from the credit and the criticism. If I am not focused on the results, then I won't be tempted to take the credit when it grows. The pride, the arrogance, the "look at me," "look at what I did," "we

changed this." And then, I won't feel the obligation or the responsibility to take the criticism when it doesn't happen. It was my fault, I'm no good, I'm discouraged and defeated, I shouldn't even bother anyways. No, no, no, no; we plant, we water, only He makes it grow. So, go be obedient and leave the results to God. Why are we so consumed with the results in the first place?

Shouldn't it just be enough that the kingdom of God is near in our life and we are working with the king? Or how about in Ezekiel? When God's speaking to the prophet Ezekiel, He says, "Son of man, I've made you a watchman for the family of Israel." I've made you a hope carrier in a very specific place in a very specific time. "Whenever you hear me say something, warn them for me. If I say to the wicked, you are going to die and you don't sound the alarm warning them that it's a matter of life or death, they will die and it will be your fault. I'll hold you responsible. But if you warn the wicked and they keep right on sinning anyway, they'll most certainly die for their sin, but you won't die. You'll have saved yourself." That's heavy. He says, "Hey, Ezekiel, let's be real clear right upfront. I've made you a hope carrier. I put you in a specific time in a specific place and I've asked you to obey me."

Success is obedience not results. "If you go and do what I ask you to do and they reject it, that will be on them. But if you don't do what I ask you to do, that will be on you." We are responsible to people, we are not responsible for people. We are responsible to do what God asked us to do, when God asked us to do it, and how God asked us to do it. We are not responsible for how they respond. Think of how many prophets you see in the Old Testament that spend decades of their life preaching to people, being a hope carrier, pleading with them to turn to the Lord, and they didn't. And yet, they were incredibly successful because they did exactly what God asked them to do. And the reason this is life or death is because it's life and death, guys. Hope carriers is not a cool hat and a logo and a shirt and an Instagram post. It is literally life and death. People are lost in their sins and their transgressions.

We are trying to seek and save that which is lost, rescue people out of the kingdom of darkness. This is why you are an ambassador, a citizen, salt, light, leaven, the light of the world, in the world, but of the kingdom. It literally is life and death. And even if they don't, you still save yourself. In other words, you are still experiencing the kingdom life. Because "today I set before you life and death, now choose life" through the obedience that God has asked you to do. Does that make sense to you? Success is obedience not results. And here's how it works. We go out and we scatter seed. Everywhere we go as hope carriers, we're scattering seeds through our words, through our actions, through our behaviors, through our character, through servanthood, through wisdom, God's words, God's ways, God's wisdom, excellence, creativity, love, honor, submission, surrender, all the things.

Everywhere we go, we're scattering all these seeds. And we then often look at them and wonder, are they even growing? Like, is it even worth doing this? Well, look at what Jesus tells us. "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and

day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain - first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come." This is what being a hope carrier looks like. Night and day, you go out and you do what God asks you to do, when God asks you to do it, how God asks you to do it, and you're scattering seed everywhere you go, and you wonder, "Is it even working, is it even growing? Are people even changing? Are people grabbing hope? Is this making a difference in anybody's life?" And here's what he says, "Whether you're asleep or whether you're awake, it begins to grow because you plant, you water, only God makes it grow."

Let's say there's someone in your life and you've been scattering seed in their life for years, and you're like, "I don't know if it's working. Ain't nobody – there ain't no change. I ain't seeing no change." And they move and they go to another city. And they work with someone else who's a hope carrier. And for years, that person is scattering seed in their life, and they're like, "Is it even working? I don't see no change. The guy's still the same as he was the first day I met him." And then, he moves again and he goes to another city for a few years, and he has a neighbor, and that neighbor is scattering seed in his life for years and years saying, "Is it even working? I don't see no change. The guy's still the same as he was. In fact, he's getting worse, you know, it's not going well here." And then, a couple years later, he moves back home and his grandma leads him to the Lord and he gets saved. Here's the question, who gets the credit? God. Who was successful? Every one of those hope carriers, because they did what God asked them to do when God asked them to do it.

This is the key. The question is can you spend your life preparing for a revival you may never see? Can you spend your life tending a garden you may never enjoy? Can you spend your life building something that you may never get to experience? This is what a hope carrier's life is like. Some of you, you got into this, and you were like, all excited. You were like "One seed, boom, full grown tree, fruit shooting out everywhere." That's what you were thinking. And this is like, hey, this is how the kingdom works. And part of it is just to keep us humble. Because otherwise we would think we made it grow. We plant, we water, God makes it grow. Can I just tell you, if you're going to be a hope carrier or you're going to be in ministry or you're going to be a leader, a disciple maker, for any period of time with Jesus, you've got to be okay with this. You see me all the time. You see me – like, I wish I could see you in your hope carrier space. You see me in my hope carrier space.

Sometimes I get it right. Sometimes I get it wrong. But I'm up here all the time. This is – like, this verse means something to me because I'm scattering all the time. And I'm like, "Is it working? Is it growing? Is it working? Is it growing?" But whether I sleep or whether I wake up, I have to, by faith, believe that God is going to make it grow. And some of you, you're here and you're just like, wore out from it all. And you've been trying to be a hope carrier to your child for years. You've been trying to be a hope carrier to your spouse for years, to that neighbor, to that parent, to that friend, to that coworker. And it's like, nothing's happening. It's like, it's

getting harder. It's getting worse. Some of you, you've been in education for 20 years. You're like, "Was my life even worth it?" "I've been trying to change my business and make a kingdom culture. Like, is anything even happening?" Some of you as a Circle Leader or a Serve Team Leader, you're like, "What are we even doing? Is anything happening?"

Yes, it's happening. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." "Let us not become weary," but you can't reap if you don't sow. And at the right time, God will make that thing grow. And even if it never grows in their life, we're reaping a harvest of character and righteousness in your life. Listen to me, if we judged Jesus the way we judge ourselves, we would say Jesus was a failure. If we judge Jesus the way we judge ourselves, which is results, we would call Jesus a failure from His time on earth. I mean, think about it. He's born in a manger. He lives for 30 years in hiddenness. No one even knows who He is. He starts to build a team and the only people He can get is washed-out fishermen and tax collectors.

His own family thought He was crazy, wanted nothing to do with it; they didn't fund His big dream. The crowds that He would gather around Him quickly would leave the moment He said one thing that they didn't like. Talk about cancel culture, Jesus knew it well. He couldn't do any miracles in His own hometown. The Pharisees, the religious leaders of the day, were trying to kill Him. One of His own 12 disciples sold Him out for 30 pieces of silver. When He was arrested, His entire team deserted Him, wouldn't even stand there with Him. When He died and rose again from the grave, all of His disciples didn't even believe it was Him. Like, they didn't even think He could do it, like it was a ghost or something standing in front of them. And when He ascends into heaven after all of that time, there are only 120 disciples. Yeah, that's a failure. But that was the greatest success that ever happened.

He was the most fruitful, impactful, life-giving person who ever lived. Why? Because He was the most obedient person who ever lived. He only did what the Father was doing, when the Father was doing it, how the Father was doing it. He says of Himself, "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself, but if it dies, it will bear much fruit." He died to Himself and planted His seed into your life and into mine and into this world, and became incredibly fruitful. In fact, it says about Jesus that "He humbled Himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross." Obedience always requires death. Are you willing to be a successful hope carrier? Are you willing to die? You say, "Like, I have to die?" Maybe, but maybe it's more about dying to yourself. Because Jesus says, "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it and whoever loses his life will find it."

In other words, we have to die to our pride and our rights and our selfishness and our opinions and our perspectives and our wants and our greed and our needs. We have to die unto ourselves that we might find our life in His kingdom. I've been crucified with Christ. It's no longer I who live, it's Christ who lives within me, and what first feels like death and hard and

crucifixion is our flesh and our selfishness is dying over time as we become transformed into the image and likeness of Jesus. No longer does obedience feel like death, it feels like life. Like, this is the only thing that I would do. This is the natural choice. I naturally and effortlessly would choose already to do what God would want me to do because I've been included in Christ and His life has been formed within me.

But it requires a humility to see myself in light of God's glory and His grace. See, can I just tell you something? The most successful people in this world are people you've never heard of. The most successful people in this world are people you've never heard of. They've just quietly gone about their life in obedience to God, praying, serving, giving, forgiving, loving, honoring in the secret place, doing what God asked them to do, how God asked them to do, when God asked them to do it. Their industry doesn't recognize them. Their city doesn't know them. Their church is barely even aware of them. They have no followers on Instagram or social media. Nobody's listening or influenced by them, and yet, all of heaven knows exactly who they are. And the great cloud of witnesses is cheering them on. And one day when they pass from this age to the next age, they are going to be greeted with "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities."

The most successful people are the people who are just obedient to God, not people who pursue a life full of results. And because they're willing to be obedient in the little, God can entrust them with much. Do you realize that your obedience in this age is practice and preparation for ruling and reigning with God in the age to come? We've talked about how we will reign with God forever. This is what Jesus is talking about here. And He gives you all these little things on this side of eternity to see, are you going to be faithful? Are you going to do the little thing? Are you going to go be obedient in the here and the now, so I can entrust you with authority in the then and the there? And if obedience determines what we will rule over in the age to come, here's my question for you. If you were the king, would you give you more?

If you're the king, are you going to give you more based on the little? Authority is to have say over. And there are a whole lot of people that have say over a lot in this life that will have say over very little in the one to come. And there are a lot of people that have little say over little things in this world, but they will have say over many things in the age to come. Why? Because they were obedient to do the little that God asked them to do in the here and the now. The last shall be first and the first shall be last. The first in the kingdom of man will be last in the kingdom of God, and the last in the kingdom of man will be first in the kingdom of God. Success is obedience not results. Are you one of these kinds of people? Because that's who I want to be.

I mean, Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will obey My command." Do you realize that most time – I was thinking about this – most time when you're in church, when you're reading anything that's about learning to follow Jesus, all these things, most of the time when we talk about obedience, we have been so conditioned and bent to talk about why obedience is good

for you. It's how we spend – I'm always thinking about it. I was like, most of the time when I'm preaching to you, it's my way that I think I can convince you to, like, trust God and move forward because there's life at the end of the road. And while that's true, what if we just flipped it? And Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will obey My command." In other words, obedience is His love language. Jesus took the little assessment and it came out as obedience. Yours might be gifts, acts of service, words of affection. Okay. Jesus' is His obedience. And so, if I love Him, which is not emotions and feelings, what are we even talking about in this series, it's about seeking His good. It's good will. It's my will for the good of God.

I will obey what He commands, because I want His good. And so, if I don't obey, I have to question whether or not I love God. And if I don't love God, it's because I'm not first receiving His love for me. So, we love because He first loved us. So, here's the question for you. Based on everything that we just said, are you successful? Are you successful? If success is obedience and not results, are you successful? I'm not asking you how influential you are, how much impact you have, how fruitful you feel you are, your finances, your awards, your influence, your followers, all that stuff. I'm not asking. If this is what the Bible says the definition of all that stuff is, are you successful? Because it's real easy to get real excited about being a hope carrier for my good, and my glory, and missing that the whole point is not the results, it's just the obedience.

I mean, last week – if you were here last week, we said that a teacher of the law comes to Jesus and said, "What's the greatest commandment?" Jesus says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself." And the man responds, "Well said, teacher, you are right... when Jesus saw that He had answered wisely, He said to Him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.'" You are right. And when we say Jesus is right, this is how we enter into the kingdom of God. This is how we live in the kingdom of God. This is how we move forward in the kingdom of God. "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Jesus, I am wrong, you are right. You get to decide about what is true, what is good, what is real, only what You say is right, regardless of how I feel or think or what I want or what I desire.

So, if you were here last week, my question for you is, was there one place in your life that you just said, Jesus, You're right? And if not, why? I engage with a lot of different people throughout the week. Can I just tell you, I engaged with at least 5 different people who said, "Jesus, You are wrong. Jesus, You are wrong about tithing. Jesus, You are wrong about sexual immorality. Jesus, You are wrong about forgiveness. Jesus, You are wrong about apologizing and repentance. And Jesus, You are wrong about submission to authority. Jesus, You're wrong. You're wrong." And if there was no part of you last week, if you were here, you walked out and you thought, man, "Jesus, You're right." Can I ask you a really honest question? Why'd you come back today? Like, why are you here?



Are you hoping He's going to change His mind? Is it religious conditioning and expectations? Do you have really bad theology? Like, just if I go to church, then He'll bless my week? I mean, if your heart isn't to say, "Jesus, You are right." Like, why? Honestly, why are you here? Because what you're saying is He's not a good teacher. And if you don't think He's a good teacher, Jesus would be the first one to say, "Then go find a better teacher." Jesus wants you to live, so He would say, "If you don't think I'm right and you can find someone else that can teach you how to live life, go find them." Because sometimes I sit and I wonder, like, what are we waiting for? Are we waiting for Jesus to become more loving? We waiting for Him to become wiser? Are we waiting for Him to become more compassionate or merciful? Are we waiting for Him to discover some truth so He can help, like, more power?

Like, You're right. You're right. And there should be a sense of conviction and heaviness to that, and yet, at the same time, freedom. I mean, we started this whole series by saying we are in an era of moving from good American church to kingdom come. Good American church – comfort, convenience, consumption, what I want, make me feel good. It's about me. I'm here to consume something. Kingdom come is, I came early with awe and respect and reverence to meet with God. I have a fear of the Lord that's growing in my heart. And I'm here to minister to other people and be ministered to. And I can't wait to meet with God and the people of God and whatever God says, because You say so, Lord, I will do it. I'm a disciple. I'm a learner. I'm a student. I'm a follower. I'm not where I want to be, but man, I'm not where I used to be and I'm on a journey with Jesus. Where are you in this continuum?

Like, do you come to listen, listen to hear, and hear to obey? Do you listen to hear and hear to obey? Because I think a lot of us, we don't obey because we haven't heard and we're not hearing because we're not listening. You say, I'm listening. But I think a lot of us listen with skepticism, with doubt and distraction, and argumentative demeanors. We listen like the world listens on Twitter. It's like, we're already convinced that we're right and He's wrong. So, not really listening, so I can't hear, get revelation and understanding. So, then I can't obey and move forward. But the Bible says, don't just be a hearer of the word, be a doer. Like, you listen to hear and you hear to obey. And when I obey, I'm saying, "Jesus, You're my king and I want to live in Your kingdom." This is, "You are right. You are my king and I want to live in Your kingdom." "You are wrong. I am the king of my own kingdom." There's no other option to this. And you just can – just got to decide in your own life.

And all I'm trying to do is present questions to you for you to decide. Like, genuinely, if it's, "Jesus, You're wrong." Seriously, like, seriously, no other church that I know of would say this to you, but why are you here? Go find a better teacher; not communicator, teacher. I'm not a teacher, I'm a communicator. He's the teacher. I'm just trying to show you what He says. And if He's not right, then who is? That's a great question. Write that down in your journal. If you didn't bring a journal, tell the person next to you, "Write this down for me." If He's not right, who is? Because if no one's right, then anything goes. But someone's got to be right about

something, and maybe it's Jesus. "Therefore, consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."

Are you careful in how you listen? Because whatever you do with what you hear determines what you will hear. Unused revelation makes your heart hard. This is what this is saying. If you hear something from God and you don't do anything with it, it hardens your heart. It's like getting a vaccine. You get a little bit of the virus, your body builds up a resistance to it, and the next time that thing tries to come against you, you resist it. So, if I hear, but I never obey, or I listen, but I never hear, and then, I never obey, what happens is now I think, some of you will finish this whole series and you'll be like, "I got hope carriers, I got kingdom, I got dreaming, I got work, I got ruling and reigning with God, but you didn't do anything with it." So, the next time someone or God tries to talk to you about it, you're resistant to it because you think you already got it. Like every day, every moment, you have to answer this question – am I a disciple right now?

Not, did you get saved at church camp 15 years ago? Are you a disciple, like – right now, where you sit, are you a disciple? Like, this very moment, are you like, "I'm actually – yes, I'm a disciple. A learner, a student, a follower, one who's becoming like Jesus, and He says that if I obey what He says, then I'm really His disciple. So, yes, I am actually choosing to be a disciple right now." Or is the answer no? Only you get to answer that question. I mean, there's an old saying that says, "Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay." Take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay. And at some point in time, you have to ask yourself, how much is your sin costing the people around you? You say, "My sin doesn't cost anybody anything. Like, I don't even see it as sin." It's fine. Make no mistake, the Bible says, sin steals, kills, and destroys.

So, your sexual immorality might be stealing your mother's mind. Your pride might be killing your husband's soul. Your love of money might be destroying your children's future. Your addiction might be stealing, killing, and destroying the generation after you, and setting in motion a generational curse over their life. You just have to like, call it what it is, and acknowledge, and ask the question, how much is my sin costing the people around me? But a better question is to flip it, and say, how much will my obedience of stepping into the kingdom bless those around me, because like a boat cutting through the water, it sets in motion a wake that will roll out and bless people that I never even see as I move forward with God. Come on. Jesus in our hope carrier verse, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. I have been given say over all things in heaven and on earth." Here's my question for you. Are you a part of heaven or earth?

Great answer, yes. Your body is on earth, but you are seated in heavenly places with Christ. You're in the world, but you're of the kingdom. You are a citizen of heaven, but you are an ambassador on this earth, which means He has say over all of you. "Therefore, go and make

disciples of all nations." Go and make disciples. It is impossible to make someone into something that you are not. I can't make you into something that I am, first, not. So, go and make students, learners, followers, obeyers, but I can't make you into something that I'm not. "Baptize them, immerse them in the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, the power of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey." I can't teach you to obey where I'm living in disobedience. I can't teach you to do something that I'm not willing to do myself.

And I know some of you today, you're sitting here, you're listening, you're like, "Bro, I'm excited about being a hope carrier in education and in my business and in the government and all the things, what does obeying God over here have to do with all this?" Everything. Because disobedience in one area is disobedience in every area. Disobedience is a disobedient life. I can't say, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I say?" I can't say, "You're my king here, but I'm my own king over there." He's either king of all or He's king of none. "And surely I am with you always." The more I start to realize that God is with me, the more I want to obey, because in His presence is fullness of joy. So, here's the question. Do you have a vision for a life of obedience or a life of results? The vision of your life. Is it a vision for a life of obedience to God or results in this world?

Because you have a vision of one of those two things, which one is it? And it's okay to be real honest, to be like, it's to be results. Then tell God, say, "Help me God." And look at this verse. "I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do." "I have found David who lives as a beloved son, who has a heart that has been formed into my image and my likeness, and he will do everything I want him to do. He can be king over the garden I've given to him because he understands I am king over all." Okay. I want this verse to be true of my life. "I have found John, son, a man after my heart, he will do everything I want him to do." You don't have a dream for your life? You don't have a vision?

You're confused about who you should become and what you should pursue? Here you go, right here. For some of you, this is all you need. What a worthy calling of your life. I'm going to spend the rest of my life becoming this. That is a dream above all dreams. That is a vision beyond all visions. That is a calling beyond all callings. Because how does this verse read in your life? "I have found you, son." – Or orphan? – "A man or woman after my heart." – After the world's heart? After religion's heart? – "And he or she will do everything I want them to do." – Some of what I want them to do? Most of what I want them to do? Or none of what I want them to do? And the really cool part is, however He finds you now doesn't have to be who you stay for the rest of your life.

Because you can be found by God as an orphan with a heart after this world doing nothing God wants you to do in this very moment. And by the grace of God, you can become the son or daughter with a man after God's own heart who will do everything He wants you to do, because only Jesus can change that. Last verse, some of you are like, "I can't do it. I want to obey God, but I can't." If you start with want, you're already well on the way. "For the grace of

God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." Are you included in all men? Great, then grace is here for you. And grace will "teach you how to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age." Present age, that would be like today. Like, in the here and now. Not like tomorrow, not like in a week from now, not like in two years, not like when I get done with school or when I get married or when the kids leave the house. Like no, I can live a godly life today. "Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself,"

It is not for the world, it is for Him, "A people that are his very own, eager to do what is good." The grace of God has showed up in your life to set you free from the things of this world and empower you from the inside out to live a completely different life. You are not in bondage to the things that you think you can't get past. You have to bring them to the Lord and let His grace, which is not just forgiveness, it's empowerment. His divine power has given us everything for life and godliness. It will give you a godly life, purified, eager to do what is good. Hear me, the spirit in you wants to obey God more than the flesh that's against you wants to rebel against Him. The new heart in you wants to be godly more than your old life wants to be worldly. So, if you're listening to all this obedience and it's pushing you down and you feel. That's not Jesus.

It's kindness that leads to repentance. There's no condemnation for those who are in Christ, but it has to start with this sense of, my will is to turn towards His will for my life. Obedience is choosing to say, I want you to be my king and I want to live in your kingdom. And even if nobody changes and nothing around me happens and I live in hiddenness for the next 50 years of my life, I can still be successful and be faithful in the little and you promise you will entrust me with much. I'm ruling and reigning with you, God, in the now and I will rule and reign with you, God, in the forever. Who are you going to be 100 years from now? Who are you going to be 5,000 years from now? Who are you going to be 100,000 years from now? You say, "I'll be dead."

In Jesus, you're alive, ruling and reigning forever. Become the kind of person in the here and now that He can entrust to rule and reign in the then and there. That's a whole lot better than awards and money and education and all the things that we run after. But you've got to have a vision for it. Success is obedience not results. So, close your eyes. What's the Holy Spirit want to say to you today? I think there's something in the atmosphere that doesn't want you to hear this invitation. But Jesus is smiling and He's saying, "But if you listen, you can hear. And if you hear, you have the opportunity to obey. And if you obey, you can live in a kingdom of life."

Success is obedience, it's not results. So, can I just take some heavy loads off of some of you that feel like you're a failure because your kids [dot, dot, dot]. Can I take a heavy load off of some of you who think you're a failure because your marriage is [dot, dot, dot]. Can I take a heavy load off of some of you because you feel like all the students that you've poured into aren't [dot, dot, dot]. Can I take a heavy load off of some of you who have prayed prayers that

you've never seen come to pass and you think your prayers are weak and ineffective? I want to take that off of you in Jesus' name.

Because obedience in the secret place is a life of success. And you truly are a disciple of Jesus when you just do what He asks you to do, when He asks you to do it, how He asks you to do it. We plant, we water, only God makes it grow. I hope today is a decision moment for you. Jesus, You are right about something. You don't even have to say, like, you don't have to, like, you're like, "My life is a disaster. I can't say you're right about a hundred things, I'm going to fall apart." Just pick one. Just pick one. Just start there. Jesus, You're right about this. And then, You're right about that. So, I'm going to take a next step and I'm going to move forward by faith. You understand, obedience is action. So, you can't say you're obedient if you're not acting. Faith without works is dead. Saying, "I believe it," but not moving forward in it, says, "I don't believe it."

So, Holy Spirit, I just pray that You would make some things grow. We're doing our best to plant and to water in the midst of the storms and the wind that wants to blow them away. In the midst of the hard soil, in the midst of the rocks and the sun that can scorch, in the midst of the thorns and thistles. We're just trying to sow some seeds, Lord. Would You make some things grow in us? Because only You have the power and the authority to bring forth life. Thank You, Jesus, that we get to be Your disciples. May we learn to love You the way You love us. In Your name we pray, amen.